

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 have been cancelled. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this application and in other applications. Claims 24-32 are pending in the subject application.

In the Office Action mailed January 27, 2003, the Examiner objected to the drawings because of certain errors and omissions. The drawings have been amended as follows:

- a) Fig. 1 has been designated as "Prior Art".
- b) In Fig. 2, "Mail Item Files" has been relabeled "200".
- c) In Fig. 3, "Mail Item File" block has been relabeled "200" and the specification has been amended accordingly. The E-Mail Addresses has been labeled as "315" and the specification has been amended accordingly. The "List of Value Added Services" has been labeled "318"
- d) In Fig. 5, step "425" has been added as recited in the specification.
- e) Figs. 6, 7 and 8 have been relabeled to Figs. 6A, 6B and 7 respectively as described in the specification.
- f) A more legible copy of Fig. 7 is provided herewith.

The Examiner objected to the disclosure because of certain informalities related to the references to the drawings. The drawings and disclosure have been amended as set forth above.

The Examiner objected to claims 5 and 14 because of certain informalities. Claims 5 and 14 have been cancelled.

The Examiner has provisionally rejected claims 1 and 19 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over any of claims 1, 26 and 27 of copending Application No. 09/339,768. Claims 1 and 19 have been cancelled.

The Examiner has provisionally rejected claims 2-18, 20-23 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being

unpatentable over any of claims 1, 26 and 27 of copending Application No. 09/339,768 in view of Kara, PCT Publication WO 99/21330. Claims 2-18 and 20-23 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Sansone, US Patent No. 5,978,781 in view of Kara, PCT Publication WO 99/21330. Applicant has cancelled claims 1-23 and added claims 24-32 to more clearly distinguish the present invention.

The present invention is directed to a system and method for providing a value added service associated with the delivery of a mail piece. The value added service is response message from the recipient of a mail piece to the originator of the mail piece that includes a scanned image of the mail piece, an image of the recipients signature indicating receipt of the mail piece and, optionally, a personal message from the recipient created at the time of receipt of the mail piece.

Neither Sansone, nor Kara, alone or in combination disclose or suggest combining a captured electronic image of the mail piece, a captured image of the recipient's signature at the time of delivery and a captured response message, which is composed by the recipient when the mail piece is delivered, to form an electronic message response acknowledging receipt of the mail piece.

Referring to the Examiner's comments concerning the rejection of original claim 5, the Examiner, acknowledging that Sansone does not disclose including an image of the mail piece in the delivery confirmation, relied on Kara, page 27, lines 7-17 to disclose that an image of the mail piece is part of a message returned to the originator of the mail piece. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Kara does not disclose sending an image of the mail piece. Instead, Kara discloses including a "code" in the confirmation message, such as a "two dimensional bar code" containing not only relating to the size, date/time of the transmission, and sender and/or receiver information, "but also information from which the complete document may be later produced". The description of the code and its purpose does not disclose or suggest sending an image of the mail piece back to the originator as part of a confirmation or return receipt.

Referring to the Examiner's comments concerning the rejection of original claim 5, the Examiner, acknowledging that Sansone does not disclose including an image of a recipient signature in the delivery confirmation, relied on Kara, page 17, lines 21-23 and page 36, lines 13-16 to disclose that an image of a recipient signature is part of the message returned to the originator of the mail piece. In the new claim 24, Applicant clarifies that an image of a recipient's signature is captured when a mail piece is delivered to the recipient.

Referring to the Examiner's comments concerning the rejection of original claim 5, the Examiner, acknowledging that Sansone does not disclose including a message from the recipient in the delivery confirmation, relied on Kara, page 27, lines 19-21 and page 37, lines 19-20 to disclose that the confirmation message includes a message from the recipient. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Kara does not disclose sending a message composed by the recipient at the time of delivery. In the new claim 24, Applicant clarifies that the response message is composed by the recipient when the mail piece is delivered.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application, as amended is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (203) 924-3217 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,



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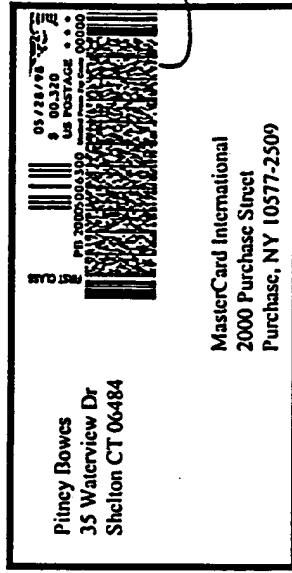
Charles R. Malandra
Signature

May 27, 2003
Date

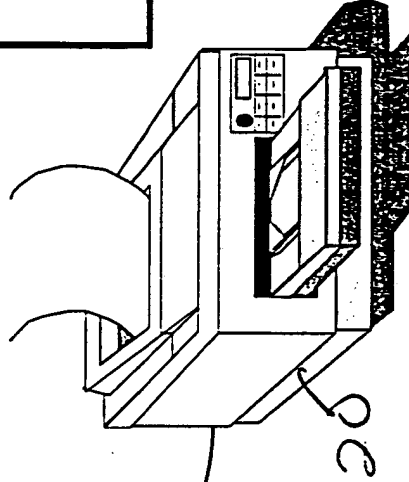
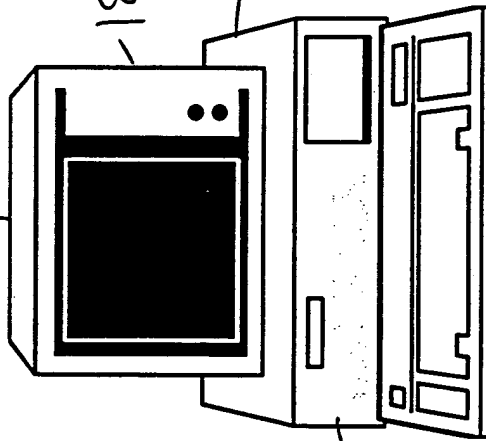


to public electronic communication network

F-2224
FIG. 1
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PRIOR ART



Computer

Printer

FIG 1





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FIG. 3
3 of 8

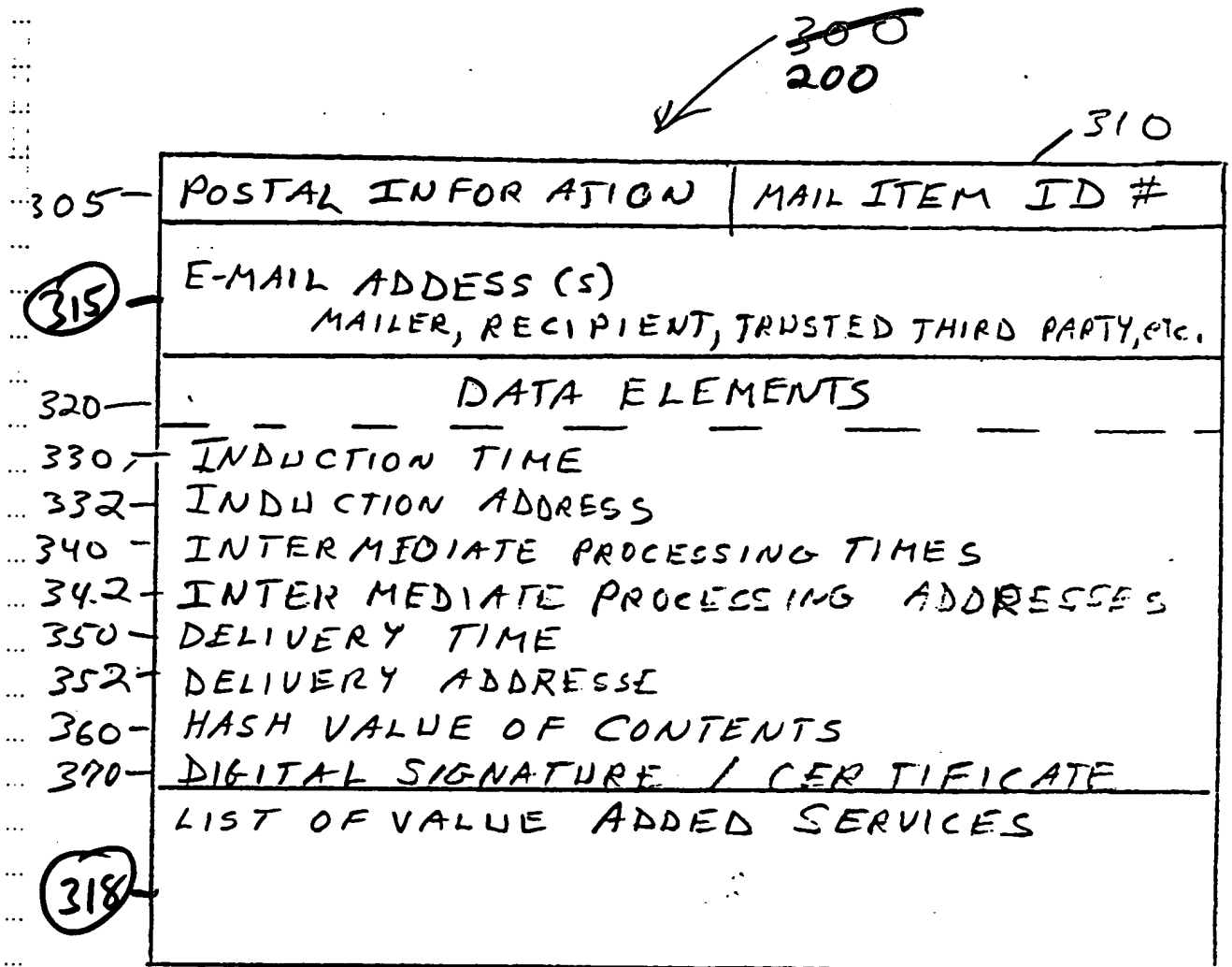


FIG-3

400
ENTER OR SELECT DELIVERY ADDRESS INFORMATION,
RETURN ADDRESS INFORMATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

F-224

405
SELECT DESIRED VALUE-ADDED SERVICES, RATING INFORMATION
AND CONFIRMATION NOTIFICATION INFORMATION, SUCH AS E-MAIL ADDRESS,
FACSIMILE NUMBER, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND/OR PAGER NUMBER

FIG. 5
5 of 8

410
COMPUTE CRYPTOGRAPHIC POSTAGE VALIDATION CODE (CPVC) USING DIGITAL
SIGNATURE WITH APPENDIX, OR DIGITAL SIGNATURE WITH MESSAGE RECOVERY,
A HYBRID DIGITAL SIGNATURE OR MESSAGE AUTHENTICATION CODE OR
POSTAGE VALIDATION CODE

415
FORMAT DIGITAL POSTAGE MARK INFORMATION (METER ID, MAIL ITEM ID,
ORIGINATION POSTAL CODE, SERVICE INDICATOR, RATING
PARAMETERS, DELIVERY ADDRESS IDENTIFIER DATE, POSTAGE VALUE, CIVC)
FOR PRINTING IN OCR/HUMAN READABLE FORMAT AND 2D BAR CODE

420
IMPRINT MAIL ITEM (OR LABEL) WITH DIGITAL POSTAGE MARK,
AND DEPOSIT/INDUCT MAIL ITEM INTO POSTAL PROCESSING SYSTEM

425
DEPOSIT/INDUCT MAIL ITEM INTO POSTAL
PROCESSING SYSTEM
F/GS



500

SCANNING OF DPM TO OBTAIN DELIVERY INFORMATION
AND VALUE-ADDED SERVICES INFORMATION INCLUDING MAILER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS

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FIG. 6A
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505

OBTAIN VERIFICATION KEY FROM MAIL ITEM OR EXTERNAL DATA BASE AND VERIFY
CRYPTOGRAPHIC POSTAGE VALIDATION CODE (CPVC) USING DIGITAL
SIGNATURE WITH APPENDIX, OR DIGITAL SIGNATURE WITH MESSAGE
RECOVERY, A HYBRID DIGITAL SIGNATURE OR MESSAGE AUTHENTICATION CODE
OR CHECK PVC

IS CPVC CORRECT ?

510

IS THIS A SPECIAL CONFIRMATION SERVICE ITEM?

515

MARK MAIL ITEM FOR SPECIAL HANDLING BY THE
DELIVERY MAILMAN AND MAIL ITEM IS SORTED AND
TRANSPORTED FOR FINAL SORT AND DELIVERY

520

OUTSORT MAIL ITEM
FOR EXCEPTION
PROCESSING

590

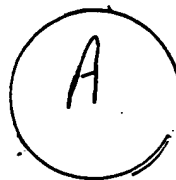
NORMAL PROCESSING

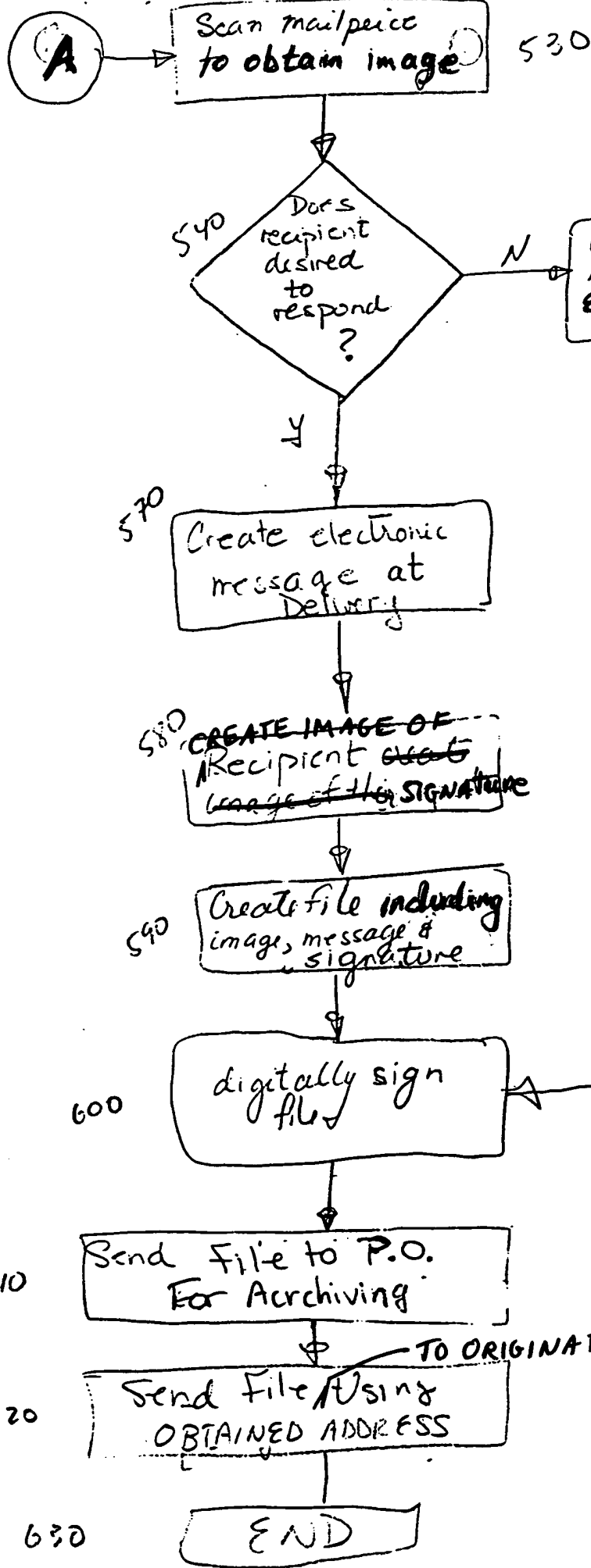
DELIVER INTO A MAILBOX OR HANDED TO
THE RECIPIENT, THE DELIVERY MAILMAN SCANS
DPM TO OBTAIN THE CONFIRMATION NOTIFICATION
ADDRESS

525

580

FIG. 6A





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FIG. 6B


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FIG. 6B



700


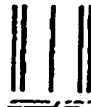
Image of the signed form

LA POSTE  **Certified Mail Receipt**
(Domestic Mail Only)

Date of print: 9/25/2000 3:29:24 PM SN: 176 6908 8259 3940 4573

Image of Envelope

David K. Lee
15 Waterbury DR
Mentor, CT 06049

  U.S. POSTAGE
\$02.200
Sep 25 2000
PS 12
4294967796
06484

David K. Lee
1511 Elm St.
Mentor, CT 06049

Recipient's Signature: *David K. Lee* 9/25/00

Date signed:

To: messenger

Digital signature of the signed form

Date: 9/25/2000 3:31:04 PM S/N: 3786 6396 5712 3205 3784

4644 8129 6970 1935 4454 9024 5813 3328 9008 1662 1492 8001 2357 2018 1717 5953 5124
6346 3345 9734 286 3842 4416 8350 1454 1795 8683 3665 3656 3249 2644 9313 6616 7154
5072 2101 538 1026 9045 5918 4385 6100 6480 8135 6660 4990 5164 8521 8690 1842 8284 639
405 4990 6457 5759 8619 2118 2266 9265 7813 7906 7284 9553

720

710

730

740

750

770

760

780

FIG. 7

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